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* Not seen in original.

4. NEW DISTRIBUTIONAL RECORD OF *PETAURISTA FULVINUS* WROUGHTON, 1911 (MAMMALIA: RODENTIA: SCIURIDAE), WITH COMMENTS ON ITS TAXONOMIC STATUS

Petaurista fulvinus Wroughton, was till now known only from Shimla (Shimla district, Himachal Pradesh, India), its type-locality. During the course of a faunistic survey of Dudwa Tiger Reserve in the terai and the surrounding areas in Kheri district of Uttar Pradesh, a male specimen of this taxon was collected, while feeding on a mango tree. This constitutes the first authentic record of this form from the area, and extends its distributional

range much further to the southeast.

The taxonomic status of *Petaurista fulvinus* has been a subject of controversy. Wroughton (1911) described this taxon on the basis of a single specimen. Robinson and Kloss (1918) and Ellerman (1940) maintained *P. fulvinus* as a distinct species. But, Ellerman and Morrison-Scott (1951), and Ellerman (1961) synonymized it with *Petaurista petaurista albiventer*. Ellerman (1961)

remarked, "The colour distinction given by Wroughton for '*birrelli*' and '*fulvinus*' strikes me as individual variations rather than racial characteristics." However, the present specimen tallies well with the description given by Wroughton (op. cit.) for *P. fulvinus*. A detailed description of the specimen is given below.

General colour of dorsum hazel, grizzled with white on back. Parachute darker on outside edges, ochraceous rufous on shoulders and behind forearms. Ventral parts pale rufous. Individual hairs of back olive grey basally, rest bright hazel with black tip and subterminal white rings. Face same colour as that of back. Cheeks white and tinged with rufous. Muzzle whitish. Hand and feet dark cinnamon rufous all throughout. Tail a little lighter than feet, and much tinged with rufous, with some black hairs at tip.

An examination of the identified specimens (n=8) (study skins and skulls) of *Petaurista petaurista* present in the Zoological Survey of India, from northwestern Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh of India, and adjoining areas of Pakistan, reveals that the study skins can easily be divided into two groups on the basis of the dorsal coloration. In one group (consisting of five skins), the dorsal colour is darker without any trace of grizzling on the back, while in the other group (consisting of three skins, including the present one), the dorsal colour is much lighter and distinctly grizzled with white. This distinction in dorsal coloration was utilized by Wroughton (1911) in framing the key for identification of *albiventer* and *fulvinus*. Further, the hand up to fingers, and feet are black or blackish (vs cinnamon rufous in *fulvinus*) and a black band is present above the muzzle (absent in *fulvinus*) in the study skins of the darker group, i.e. *albiventer*. Besides, the tail of the specimen collected from the surroundings of Dudwa Tiger Reserve is less bushy than that of the specimens of *albiventer*.

A study of the skulls reveals that the occipital region is concave in *albiventer*; but more or less flat in *fulvinus*. The palate, in relation to occipito-nasal length, in *fulvinus* is shorter (50-52% vs above 53.5%) and the maxillary

width broader (19.8% vs 18.9%) than that in *albiventer*.

Therefore, *Petaurista fulvinus* Wroughton, should be resuscitated as a distinct species, and should not be treated as a synonym of *Petaurista petaurista albiventer* (Gray), *contra* Ellerman and Morrison-Scott (1951) and Ellerman (1961).

Material examined: 1 male: Bankati, North Kheri Forest Division, Kheri district, Uttar Pradesh; 28 Jun. 1987; R.K. Ghose coll.

Measurements (in mm, after Ellerman 1961): *External:* Head and body 377; tail 458; hindfoot 76; ear 46. *Cranial:* Occipito-nasal 70.8; palate 35.5; nasal 21.6; upper tooth-row 16.3; bulla 13.4; zygomatic width 45.0; inter-orbital width 16.0; orbit 25.5; diastema 14.0.

Additional material examined: *Petaurista petaurista albiventer:* 1 male : Trium (c 2,988 m), Pakistan, 17 Apr. 1922, H.W. Wells coll.; 1 male : Murree (c 914 m), Pakistan, 21 Apr. 1922, H.W. Wells coll.; 2 females : Naggar, Himachal Pradesh, 29 Oct. 1958, J. Schmidt coll.; 1 male : Rahla, Kullu Valley, Himachal Pradesh, 4 Jun. 1922, H.W. Wells coll. (the first two specimens were originally identified as *P. inornata*).

Petaurista fulvinus: 1 male : Nainital (c. 2,286 m), Nainital district, Uttar Pradesh, 2 Jan. 1914, C.A. Crump coll.; 1 Juv. unsexed: Kumaon, Uttar Pradesh, other particulars not recorded (originally identified as *P. inornatus*).

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